The UNITARIAN MONTHLY

No. 164 (Vol. XV.—5) MAY, ONE PENNY.

What Unitarians Think of Jesus.

(The following expresses the Unitarian view).

CHRIST actually was what he supposed himself to be—*not God*, for he never made the slightest pretensions to that character, and would probably have thought such a pretension as blasphemous as it seemed to the men who condemned him,—but a man charged with a special, express and unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth and virtue. But about the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality, combined with profundity of insight, which *if we abandon the idle expectation of finding scientific precision where something different was aimed at* must place the prophet of Nazareth . . in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer, and martyr to that mission, who ever existed upon the earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity.

JOHN STUART MILL.

Notes and News.

Contributors whose "copy" is not yet inserted may be patient, as there is overset matter which has been standing for months waiting to be used, and which must be worked up.

In spite of the latest rise in cost of paper the U.M. will keep to 12 pages to the end of this quarter. If reduced to 8 pp. notification will be made in the June issue.

The Manchester District Sunday School Association Annual Meeting, Saturday, April 14th, passed off quite successfully though the attendance was inevitably far below what has been usual on Good Friday. There were congratulatory resolutions to Rev. H. E. and Mrs. Dowson concerning their jubilee at Gee Cross, and to Mr. and Mrs. John Reynolds on the attainment of their golden wedding day. Also a resolution in favour of every endeavour to make all future wars between nations impossible, and urging upon Sunday Schools the importance of systematic instruction in the methods and principles necessary for the realisation of universal brotherhood. The speakers included Mr. A. Slater (president), Rev. A. W. Fox, M.A., Miss Johnstone (Bury), and Rev. John Ellis (Stalybridge).

Colonel John Ward, hero of the Tyndarus, who was the means of saving those on board by his cool and courageous exercise of discipline, is a member of our Wandsworth Unitarian Church, and Labour M.P. for Stoke.

The Annual Meeting, E. Cheshire Christian Union, was held at the Unitarian Church, Ashton-under-Lyne, Mar. 24th, when it was resolved to present an Album and Portrait to the Rev. H. E. Dowson, B.A., in celebration of the Jubilee of his connection with the Union.

No less than 141 men have gone from the Blackfriars (Unitarian) Mission into His Majesty's Forces; and between 70 and 80 from the Liverpool, Hamilton-road Mission.

A Sale of Work at the Accrington Unitarian Church realised £130, March 24th.

The London Executive of the British League of Unitarian Women held a successful conference with the Liverpool branch at Liverpool, March 31st.

The "Christian Life" of April 7th, makes an unfounded charge of discourtesy against "The Unitarian Monthly" for printing an illustrated article on the High Pavement Chapel, Nottingham, which it is asserted was taken from the "Christian Life" without acknowledgment,—which is not true, for the article was not the same; it was supplied in writing by one of the High Pavement members. The facts have been told to the Editor of the C.L., but he has not shown the "courtesy" of withdrawing the charge.

The Annual Meeting, Ulster Unitarian Christian Association, Belfast, March 26th, passed a resolution of adhesion to the principles and objects of the Association, the upholding and diffusion of Unitarianism.

The Manchester Association Branch of our Women's League, held its Annual Meeting at Oldham road, March 31st, when 12 branches were represented and five distant branches sent reports.

Particulars of the Annual Meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association in Whit-week will be found in the advertisement on the last page, and of other meetings in other advertisements.

The American Unitarian Association sent a message to President Wilson declaring hearty support in the present crisis.

Mutual greetings have passed between the American and British and Foreign Unitarian Associations, welcoming co-operation between the United States and Britain in defence of international justice and freedom against autocracy.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES: Mr. Harry Taylor, lay-pastor, Trafalgar-street Unitarian Church, Burnley, resigned; Mr. Jesse Pipkin, of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, appointed to Colne Unitarian Church; Rev. A. H. Dolphon has concluded his ministry at Unity Church, Sheffield, and has received farewell presentations; Rev. F. K. Freeston is officiating at the Toxteth Chapel, Liverpool, for three months; Rev. R. H. U. Bloor, B.A., has resigned at Exeter; Rev. W. S. McLauchlan, M.A., resigned at Sale; Rev. W. J. Piggott ,of Blackfriars Mission has applied for admission to the English Presbyterian Church; Rev. H. Bodell Smith resigned at Nelson, invited back to Mottram; Rev. Chas. Smith, of Middleton, has accepted appointment to Nelson.

DEATHS: Mr. Walter Bailey, M.A., Hampstead, March 21st, 80; Miss Clara Simpson, Nottingham, March 8th, 82; Miss J. E. Orr, Clonmel, March 15th, 75; Mr. John McGiffin, Belfast, March 14th, 78; Mr. Peter Nicholas, Blackpool, March 16th, 68; Mr. Wm. Barker, Framlingham, interred March 12th, 79; Mr. Threadgold, Tunbridge Wells, interred March 19th, 50; Mr. C. W. Hill, Gainsborough, interred March 13th, 24; Mrs. Geo. Cunliffe, of Bolton, at Rhos-on-Sea, March 21st, 78; Prof. A. M. Worthington, C.B., F.R.S., 65; 2nd Lieut. D. J. Lewis, of Llandyssul, killed in France, Feb. 28th, 22; Mrs. R. A. Chaplin, Balcombe, March 27th, 79; Rev. H. W. Hawkes, Bootle, April 8th, 73; Miss S. K. How, London, Mar. 31st; Corporal T. S. Crompton, Wellington Infantry, N.Z., killed in France, March 5th; Mr. John Johnson, Liverpool, April 6th, 64; Miss Mary Swanwick, Chesterfield, April 7th, 76; Miss Charlotte Willmer, Buxton, April 7th, 77; Mr. Henry Hodge, Newton Abbott, April 5th, 63.

In the death of the Rev. H. W. Hawkes, the Unitarian body has lost one who was a very successful missionary to the poor of North Liverpool, he also did good work as missionary in Japan, and was no mean poet.

Jesus.

I HAVE not called him God; for me the Christ
Is Man—Brother, and Lord in Brotherhood,
The greatest Lover of his kindred, Man
Likest to God as nearest to us all,
Whose word, unmuffled by the ages, rings
As clear as when beside Genesaret,
In Galilean fields, or on the mount
The common people gladly heard his voice
And followed. Adoration him I bear,
Whose life is pattern of that my own should be
In inward imitation, not in mine
Of outward acts, embodying the spirit
That dwelt and wrought in him: the reverent mind
That looked upon the works of God and found
The Father's love for bird and flower and man;
The o'erflowing heart, with warmest pity brimmed,
That could assuage all human sorrow, bring
To the pale face of care the smile of peace,
And bless the weary with refreshing strength.
Such adoration of his life I bear
As nearest is to worship of my kind:
For he, of all my kind the nearest God,
Stands over me; and I would touch his feet,
Become his servant, look into his face,
And go the way he bids me through the world.

WILLIAM C. HALL.

Unitarianism.

RELIGION is not a substitute for right living, but the highest form of right living. While some have affirmed that there is a shorter and easier way to God's favour than by obeying His law, Unitarianism has affirmed that God's benediction is to be won only by the homage of the heart to perfect goodness and the effort of the life to reach it. While some have affirmed that Christ has provided a perfect righteousness as a substitute for ours, that we can have it at any moment if we will, for it is all ready, and we have only to accept it, Unitarianism has affirmed that he only is righteous who doeth righteousness; and as to the work of Christ, that he lifts men into goodness, instead of saving them from the necessity of goodness; that in him is declared the Divine forgiveness, but always with the added message, go and sin no more; that he did not come bringing a signed and sealed pardon or title deed; that his work was to plant the Kingdom of God within men; to kindle in them his own spirit; to touch them with a longing for goodness, an ardent love for men, a consciousness of their Father-God that would make them blossom and bear fruit in all the sweetness and glory of life; that the whole New Testament may be said to be a sublime expansion of this idea,—the growth of the soul into likeness, and at last into absolute oneness, with Christ. Compared with this, how unspeakably poor and degrading is the view that we come into the benefit of his life and death by some mechanical transfer outside of our own character!

—S. Fletcher Williams.

To the Boys in War Service.

BROTHERS, wherever you may be and however far afield, accept our affectionate greetings from home and church and school. This time we give you a motto to hold in mind; just a line from Wordsworth's "Happy Warrior":

"More brave for this, that he has much to love."

Some men may tell you that from those who fight all talk of love must be sham and hypocrisy. Well, it depends on what you are fighting against. Let's get a clear idea of what your enemy stands for, in setting out against Europe in the way he did. Never mind politics for the moment; what was the attitude of heart and the root desire from which his action sprang? Here is the answer: His will to make war sprang from a desire for personal gain; his mind being fully conscious that for him to succeed others must fail, be ruined, degraded, destroyed. He wanted others to suffer loss, ruin, destruction, without that he could not succeed.

You are out to fight against that attitude to life. And why? Because it cuts clean through the whole social fabric, destroys all possibility of internationalism, of peace, of the coming of the Kingdom. Try to imagine the Kingdom of God with that spirit abroad in it! No, no; press forward with all your strength and win for the Kingdom, whose law is the loyal labour of each in loving union, for the lasting, eternal good of all. And while you fight, hold fast to all the finer, richer graces with a pure, tender chivalry. Pray every day of your life for purer desires, and God help us while we at home do the same. Sustain your love for home, for school, for church; for all that is clean and beautiful and good; for God Himself; and you will be "more brave for this, that you have much to love." —J.C.B.

From the Business End.

BY A MELIORIST.

V.—THE PITY OF IT.

THE committee meetings of the Bardsley Street Unitarian Church were usually deadly dull; occasionally they were disgraceful. The dull meetings were dull because there was nothing more exciting to discuss than accounts, repairs, and tea-drinkings, parties, and annual services. The disgraceful meetings were disgraceful because two or three members, who were anything but Christian brothers, disagreed about trivialities, and generally finished up by losing their tempers and calling each other names.

A special meeting for the consideration of the "Business End" of their congregational life could hardly be classed among the dull meetings. How it took its place in the other category, we shall see. The disclosure of William Wallis's scheme for the improvement of church attendance had shaken every committee-man out of his long slumber, and, in addition to some private thinking, there had been not a little comparing of notes. Each had admitted, though reluctantly, that there was something in it; but some dissented from the hint that it was their duty to attend. To a few the matter was a fuss about nothing; whilst one or two resented it as a piece of impertinence on the part of the secretary. There was every promise, therefore, of a lively meeting.

At eight o'clock there was not a single absence—a most unusual thing; equally unusual was the atmosphere. A new element seemed to be in the air, and, with the possible exception of the chairman, Edward Brown, a level-headed and self-possessed solicitor, no one was quote at his ease.

With lawyer-like precision, Brown announced that before they dealt with the special matter to be introduced by Mr. John Baines, who, the secretary had informed him, would be present at 8-30, they would dispose of the ordinary business. This procedure had a steadying effect on the meeting, and when John Baines, genial and smiling, appeared, most of them had recovered their composure.

Before the chairman had time to call upon their visitor, Tom Dickson sprang to his feet. "Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of order," he said. "I should like to know why we weren't notified that Mr. Baines would attend to-night? No offence to you, Mr. Baines," he added, looking towards the old gentleman.

"I should think not, indeed," ejaculated Richard Roberts, a hot-blooded Welshman.

"When the notices were issued," quietly explained Brown, "no one knew, not even Mr. Baines himself, that he would be at this meeting. However, Mr. Dickson is within his rights in raising the point."

"Let him move that the meeting close," said Roberts fiercely, "and, if he gets a seconder, I will move that we hold a special meeting forthwith to hear what our old friend has to say."

"Nonsense, Mr. Chairman," cried a member; "proceed to business."

"Hear! Hear!" came from several.

Unabashed, Dickson stood his ground. "Didn't the secretary share this Business End idea?" he demanded, glaring at Roberts; "then, why couldn't he introduce it?"

Roberts, glaring back, was on the point of returning to the fray, when the Chairman arose. "There are reasons, I understand," said Brown. "The suggestion that Mr. Baines should do so came from the minister."

This was too much for Dickson. "Let the parson stick to his job, and do that as he ought," he almost shrieked, "and leave business to us."

"Shame!" murmured one or two.

"Mr. Dickson, I must request you to moderate your language. Perhaps you don't realise that it is not the action of the minister you challenge, but that of the chairman, who accepted the suggestion," said Brown firmly, fixing the unhappy Dickson with his eyes.

The more timid members felt uncomfortable. They were rather afraid of Dickson, but now they feared for him. Brown, however, had too much self-respect to press his advantage.

"As a protest against the slur on our respected minister," said the fiery Roberts, "I give notice to move at the next meeting that he be appointed an ex-officio member of the committee. Such talk is outrageous."

"I doubt," said Brown, smiling, "if Mr. Benson would serve as a sort of protest incarnate. There are weightier reasons why he should be here. Let us first consider this matter of the 'Business End,' and I believe we shall find that the presence of the minister is imperative."

"I disagree," snapped the blind Dickson.

"Indeed!" responded Brown, his face hardening a little. "Then perhaps you will be good enough to say why."

"The minister of Bardsley Street never has been on the committee, and, if I can prevent it, never will be, whoever he is."

"Mr. Chairman," broke in Robert Anderson, a recent convert from Presbyterianism, "excuse my interrupting, but we came to-night to hear something new from our venerable friend, Mr. Baines, not to hear what we've heard too often from Mr. Dickson."

"Just so, Mr. Anderson; but I must not be unfair to Mr. Dickson. If he has ground for the stand he takes, in justice to all concerned he should be allowed to state it."

"But, pardon me, how are you going to be just to Mr. Dickson without being unjust to Mr. Baines, who is here by your invitation?"

"I surmise that what Mr. Baines has to propose will have a better chance of acceptance, if we can first of all arrive at something like unanimity concerning the relations of committee and minister."

"If I may be allowed a word at this point, Mr. Chairman," interposed John Baines, "what you have just said, sir, was in my own mind. The scheme I have to outline touches our minister very closely, and it is most desirable that there should be no division of opinion about him."

"Well put, Mr. Baines," said James Diggle, a studious shoemaker, who affected "advanced views" and had a biting tongue. "One thing at a time, say I, so let's hear what Dickson has to say."

"I'm a plain-speaking man," said Dickson, seizing his chance, "and I'm going to speak plainly now. You want the ground of my objection; well, you shall have it. The parson is a paid servant, quite as much as the caretaker or the organ-blower, and just as responsible to the committee as they are."

With blazing eyes and looking as though he would rend the speaker, Roberts jumped up. Luckily, the chairman somehow checked the threatened torrent.

"Please proceed, Mr. Dickson," said Brown coldly.

"Well, how can the minister sit on a committee to which he is responsible? How can the committee insist on him doing his duty? In my warehouse the servants are not a part of the management; if they were, my business would be as big a failure as Bardsley Street is to-day."

"You mean that we should hold Mr. Benson personally responsible for the present condition of affairs?"

"Why not? He's paid for running the show, and if he doesn't make a success of it, it is our duty to tell him so and insist on his doing differently or making room for a better man."

"Clearly, Mr. Dickson," said Brown gravely, "you are dissatisfied with Mr. Benson or his methods; will you be a little more explicit?"

"I can soon be that. 'A house-going priest makes a chapel-going people.' Have we a chapel-going people?" snarled Dickson. "No! and we shan't have till we get a parson who will visit."

Before the chairman could utter a word of reply to this cold-blooded tirade, James Diggle was on his feet. "Mr. Chairman," he almost hissed, "our plain friend doesn't realise what plain rubbish he's talking. Does HE want a house-going priest? Does he want Mr. Benson to call on HIM with a long face, and solemnly ask for the family Bible, and hold a solemn family service?"

"Who's talking rubbish now?" rattled out Dickson.

"Not James Diggle," said the shoemaker. "Doesn't Mr. Benson visit? Does he neglect the sick? Does he keep away from the folk when they've troubles? Did he stop away from Tom Dickson's when he was bad last year? though I guess he didn't get too warm a welcome. What is it you want?"

"I want him to see the people oftener; how can you expect them to attend if he doesn't look them up?"

"I see; you want him to gad about talking tittle-tattle; to run after folk who care so little about the place that they won't attend unless they are flattered by the minister wearing out their doorsteps."

"Nonsense!" rasped out Dickson.

"Nonsense, is it? and his sermons would be nonsense if he did what you want, for he'd never have time to get 'em ready."

"What's the use of getting sermons ready, if there's nobody to preach 'em to?"

"Does Mr. Benson preach to nobody?"

"A mere handful!"

"Yes, and that handful keeps Bardsley Street going. They know a good man when they see him, and a good sermon when they hear it, and would rather have their minister give them his best than have him trotting about like a carpet-bagger. Do you think Mr. Benson has no self-respect, or that he doesn't value his work more than any member of this committee?"

"It's my opinion," broke in Roberts savagely, "that Dickson has a personal grievance. If he hadn't, he wouldn't be such a fool to himself and such a nuisance to everybody else."

(To be continued.)

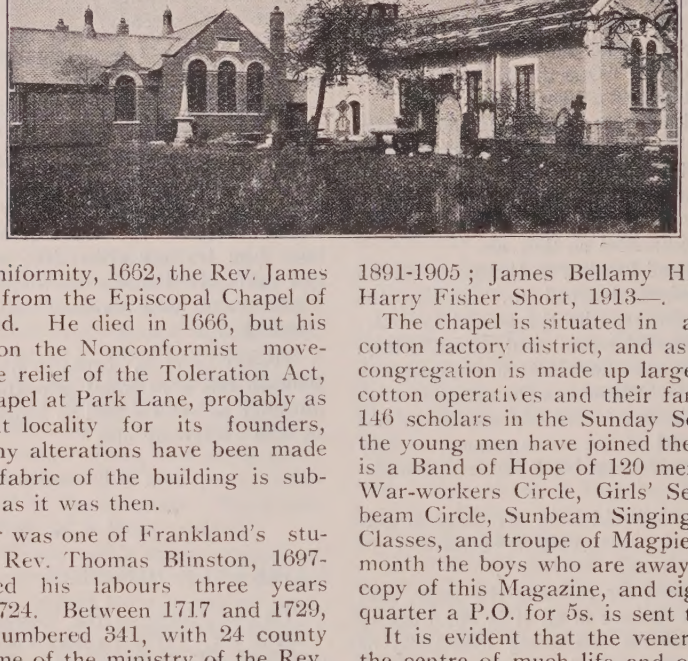
LAWRENCE HOUSE.

(To the Editor of the "Unitarian Monthly.")

Dear Sir,—May I make known to your readers that the Hostel Committee are anxious that the next message sent to our men on active service should equally reach all the women and girls from our churches, homes and Sunday schools now living away from home owing to their being engaged on War work. This term is to be understood in its wide significance, as work, not only for the army, munitions, nursing, canteens, etc., but also on the land and in the many civilian occupations in which women are helping "to carry on," while the men are away. We would send a word of greeting and cheer to our girls as well as to our boys. The Women's League, especially the Fellowship Section, are helping us, and I would beg all ministers, Sunday school workers, parents and friends, of such girls to send their names and addresses as soon as possible to the Secretary, Lawrence House, Essex Hall, Essex-street, W.C.? A postcard will be sufficient in the case of one name. The Church and Sunday School with which the women are connected should be indicated.—Yours, etc.,

M. EDITH MARTINEAU
(Mrs. Sydney Martineau).

Park Lane Chapel, nr. Wigan.



BY the Act of Uniformity, 1662, the Rev. James Wood was ejected from the Episcopal Chapel of Ashton-in-Makerfield. He died in 1666, but his followers carried on the Nonconformist movement, and after the relief of the Toleration Act, built the present chapel at Park Lane, probably as the most convenient locality for its founders, 1697. Though many alterations have been made in its interior the fabric of the building is substantially the same as it was then.

The first minister was one of Frankland's students at Rathmel, Rev. Thomas Blinston, 1697-1721. He concluded his labours three years before his death, 1724. Between 1717 and 1729, the congregation numbered 341, with 24 county voters. By the time of the ministry of the Rev. Hezekiah Kirkpatrick, 1786-1799, the gradual change of doctrine from Calvinism through Arianism to Unitarian views had taken place almost imperceptibly and without any disturbance.

The chapel was repaired, 1826; renovated 1871, gallery and old pews removed, the chapel walls being wainscotted with the old pew doors. There were further alterations, 1904.

The Sunday School was founded, 1813, a school building erected, 1867, replaced by the existing one, 1903. Many tablets on the chapel walls record the names of former ministers and benefactors, and there is a collection of relics in the vestry made by the Rev. George Fox, who ministered there for 26 years, 1864-1890. There is also a parsonage house for the minister. The full list of ministers is as follows:—Thomas Blinston, 1697-1721; Timothy Gardner, 1721-1724; Samuel Parks, 1724-1727; John Brownlow, 1727-1788; Hezekiah Kirkpatrick, 1786-1799, being assistant for his first two years; Thomas Broadbent, 1800-1811; Thomas Smith, 1812-1822; Francis Knowles, 1823-1857; James Bayley, 1858-1864; George Fox 1864-1890; James Edward Stead, 1891-1905; James Bellamy Higham, 1906-1912; Harry Fisher Short, 1913—.

The chapel is situated in a coal-mining and cotton factory district, and as a consequence the congregation is made up largely of colliers and cotton operatives and their families. There are 146 scholars in the Sunday School. Over 30 of the young men have joined the war forces. There is a Band of Hope of 120 members, a Guild, a War-workers Circle, Girls' Sewing Class, Sunbeam Circle, Sunbeam Singing Class, also Study Classes, and troupe of Magpie Minstrels. Every month the boys who are away receive a letter, a copy of this Magazine, and cigarettes, and every quarter a P.O. for 5s. is sent to them.

It is evident that the venerable chapel is still the centre of much life and of widespread influence.

Rev. H. FISHER SHORT (Park Lane).

REV. H. Fisher Short was born in 1874 at Sheffield and reared amongst the Methodists. He was lay preacher, beginning at 16 years of age, and became Unitarian when studying for entrance into a Methodist College for the ministry. He joined the Upperthorpe Unitarian Church, Sheffield, and was Sunday School teacher, and Guild worker there; was a lay preacher for the Yorkshire Unitarian Union, and was put in charge of Unitarian services at Flagg Chapel, Derbyshire, for some months; was student at the Unitarian Home Missionary College 1900-1902; minister, Aberdare, South Wales, 1902-4; Crewe, 1904-9, where he was President for Relief Fund for the Unemployed, Secretary Crewe Temperance Society, Police Court Missioner and Probation Officer, and as Secretary South Cheshire and District Association of Churches was largely instrumental in starting a Unitarian movement at Burslem, and had a successful Crewe ministry.

In September, 1909, he became minister at Mossley, where he remained until 1913, the church membership being nearly doubled, the Sunday School re-organised with large increase of membership of men's class, and establishment of a primary department in which nearly 100 scholars under eight years of age were enrolled; started a Young People's Guild, and Bible Class for young men. He became member of Council of National Conference Guilds' Union, and later its General Secretary; by a paper he read at Oldham he originated the North Cheshire and District Union of Men's Classes, and was its first president.

In his ministry at Park Lane, near Wigan, on which he entered in 1913, he revived the congregation and greatly extended the membership roll, increased the attendance at men's and women's classes, making necessary an extension scheme for better accommodation for which about £300 was secured, but the war caused suspension of operations. Successful senior and junior guilds have been organised; and classes for study of theology, sermon composition, grammar, etc. He introduced a monthly patriotic collection for various charitable purposes. He is a member of the Elementary Education Committee, of the Higher Education Committee representing the Grammar School, of the Relief Committee (Prince of Wales' Fund), and of Committee for Old Folks' Annual Tea. As extension secretary for the Guilds' Union he has inaugurated guilds in various parts of the country, and for some years has contributed a Guilds' Message regularly to this magazine.

Mr. Short has taken an active part in the work of the Unitarian Van Mission, is a member of the Missionary Conference, and has been on its committee; has been on the committee, Manchester District Sunday School Association, has done much lecturing, is a strong denominationalist, has engaged effectively in occasional controversial discussion in defence of Unitarianism, and believes in evangelising the people with our Unitarian Faith.

A portrait and sketch of Mr. Short appeared in the "Unitarian Monthly," January, 1912.

The Soul of a Child.

THE waking of children is like the unclosing of flowers: a perfume seems to exhale from those fresh young souls.

A little bird sings—a child prattles—but it is the same hymn; hymn indistinct, inarticulate, but full of profound meaning. The child, unlike the bird, has the sombre destiny of humanity before it. This thought saddens any man who listens to the joyous song of a child. The most sublime psalm that can be heard on earth is the lisping of a human soul from the lips of childhood. This confused murmur of thought, which is as yet only instinct, holds a strange, unreasoning appeal to eternal justice; perchance it is a protest against life while standing on its threshold; a protest unconscious, yet heartrending; this ignorance, smiling at infinity, lays upon all creation the burden of the destiny which shall be offered to this feeble, unarmed creature. If unhappiness comes, it seems like a betrayal of confidence.

The babble of an infant is more and less than a speech; it is not measured, and yet it is a song; not syllables, and yet a language; a murmur that began in heaven and will not finish on earth; it commenced before human birth, and will continue in the sphere beyond! These lispings are the echo of what the child said when it was an angel, and of what it will say when it enters eternity. The cradle has a yesterday, just as the grave has a to-morrow; this morrow and this yesterday join their double mystery in that incomprehensible warbling, and there is no such proof of God, of eternity, and the duality of destiny as in this awe-inspiring shadow flung across that flower-like soul.

There was nothing saddening in Georgette's prattle; her whole lovely face was a smile. Her mouth smiled, her eyes smiled, the dimples in her cheeks smiled. There was a serene acceptance of the morning in this smile. The soul has faith in the sunlight. The sky was blue, warm, beautiful. This frail creature who knew nothing, who comprehended nothing, softly cradled in a dream which was not thought, felt herself in safety amid the loveliness of nature, these sturdy trees, this pure verdure, this landscape fair and peaceful, with its noises of birds, brooks, insects, leaves, above which glowed the brightness of the sun. Her great eyes, gazing upward, were divine. No matter how dark the ceiling in the vault above a child's head, Heaven is reflected in its eyes.

—Victor Hugo, in "Ninety-three."

Sympathy.

By Rev. WILLIAM C. HALL, M.A.

SYMPATHY may be regarded as the comprehensive passion of the human heart. It can be seen to include all others. What is love if it is not a phase of sympathy? For all love,—unless we dignify by the term that self love which is no love at all,—is either a seeking after or a giving forth fellow-feeling. But sympathy to be full and potent must be more than fellow-feeling. It must be fellow-suffering. To be able to sympathise with the poor we must know poverty. To be able to sympathise with the man whose labour is in the fields, we must have experienced the difficulty of managing the team and the pain of breaking the soil that earth may yield us bread. We must be truly the fellows of others before we can feel with them. We must take their point of view, stand in their place, and live their life.

During a strike a friend of mine, a master, took on the work of one of his carters. "I learnt," he said, "that the job was worth all the wages my men were likely ever to get for it." He learnt also for the rest of his life in all his dealings with his workers the meaning of sympathy, the virtue which, if shared by masters and men, would render every industrial dispute impossible. The knowledge of it would remove from our commercial vocabulary such terms as "bosses," and "hands,"—the one with its sense of domination, the other with its sense of physical servitude—and it would make business life a fellowship for the material and vital good of all.

Many churches fail for lack of it. There are congregations which make no effort to understand the work of their ministers, and ministers who never get into touch with the lives of their people. Such churches are everywhere spiritual failures. They fail because there is no place for them in a world which everywhere calls for the sympathy of human hearts; and they will continue to fail until they learn that mutual consideration which is a central principle of the Christian gospel. We cannot be glorified together until we suffer together. Churches will be inglorious until ministers and members have together learnt the pain of the daily work to which every one is called.

The war is teaching us sympathy through the suffering it brings into the homes of us all. Do we expect a revival of religion after the war? It can only be as the churches become during the war fellowships of men and women who have learnt to be more considerate of one another and more tenderly human through the experience and understanding of the suffering by which they are surrounded. Not our theologies but our humanities make us spiritual forces.

National Conference Guilds' Union.

(This National Conference is of Unitarian and kindred Churches).

President: Rev. J. M. LLOYD THOMAS.
Gen. Sec.: Miss M. TWIST, 34, Harbury Road, Birmingham.

Topic List Sec.: Rev. MORTIMER ROWE, B.A.
Extension Sec.: Rev. H. FISHER SHORT.

Monthly Message: "THE GREAT DIVIDE."

IT would be interesting to know how many Guild members could name the doctrine, belief, opinion, conviction—call it what you will—that separates Unitarians from Trinitarians. Most of them would probably say the division was owing to a well marked difference in belief concerning God; Unitarians being monotheists, that is, holding that God is plainly, simply One; whilst Trinitarians were Tri-theists, holding that Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three distinct persons, are included in the Godhead. Others might say the division arose from the fact that in theology Unitarians are free and rational, whilst Trinitarians are bound by dogma and subordinate reason to what they call revelation. Neither of these answers would be wrong. Indeed, within the limits they imply, they would be accurate. But they don't indicate the Great Divide in modern Christianity.

A little self-examination and careful thinking would reveal, as the real line of separation, an important and far-reaching difference concerning the nature of man. To Trinitarians man is a degraded creature, sinful by nature, and unable to please God,—an awful idea which, whilst it may tend to keep some men humble, cannot but be disastrous to self-respect and respect for the race. To Unitarians, on the other hand, though imperfect, man is at heart divine, capable of infinite moral improvement, and finds his truest life and joy in seeking after harmony with God.

On their own account, many Trinitarians distinguish themselves from Unitarians by the assertion that they are evangelical, that is, bearers of Good news, and their good news is that though man's sinful nature alienates him from God, he may make his peace with the Almighty by believing that Jesus died for sinners on the Cross. The idea is too familiar to require exposition. Now

Trinitarians proclaim Good News, Unitarians proclaim Better News, nay, the Best News ever announced to the world. It is the proclamation of the essential and inherent divinity of human nature. God is the Parent of humanity, and man is His well-beloved child. Here, more than elsewhere, is the Great Divide. Here is the deep line of cleavage. And it matters tremendously whether a man stands on the one side or the other. There can be no compromise, any more than a thing can be absolutely black and entirely white at the same time. Moreover, the whole of a man's thinking, living, worshipping, his attitude towards God, but especially his attitude to man and all things human, is affected and determined by his position on either side of this great line. On which side are you? The answer requires more than words. It can be articulated only in terms of life. H.F.S.

A Talk to the Children.

DEAR YOUNG FOLKS,—

HAVE you ever looked into the inside of a watch while it is working? Isn't it wonderful? You see the wheels moving, and the hair-spring and the balance; and you know that all the wheels and different parts work together just to mark the time on the face outside. Who made that watch? Did it make itself? You will say—a man made it. Yes, that is true. The watch could not go, it could not move a wheel, unless some human being set it going.

But a watch is not so wonderful as even a little flower of the field. Look at a simple buttercup, or a daisy. The cleverest man cannot make that. Like the watch, though very different from it in other ways, it is made up of many parts all working together. There is the stalk and the flower at its top; the corolla and the petals which form it; and there are the sepals underneath, and the pistils and stamens above. These are all at work and they are alive. There is also much movement—much more than we can see. The sap or life stream moves up inside the stalk and circulates through all the other parts. The watch is not alive in the same way that the flower is. If the watch is not wound up it stops, but the movement in the flower is always going on. A man, or some human being puts life and movement into the watch. Who puts life and motion into the flower? A man cannot do that.

But there are many things more wonderful than a buttercup or a daisy. Have you listened to a bird when it sings? If the works of a watch are wonderful, which make it mark the time, what of the inside works of a bird which enable it to hop, to fly, to eat and drink, and to sing? No man can make them. No man put them together. Some One greater than man set them going and keeps them going, and makes the bird able to sing its song.

But a little baby-boy or girl in its mother's arms, though it is helpless and must be fed and have nearly everything done for it, is far more wonderful than all other things. Its little body is the finest bit of machinery that we know. It contains an engine, bellows, telegraphs, canals, and rivers, microscope, telescope, and quite a host of other instruments of various kinds. And no man fitted them all together, for there is no man able to do that. It has all been planned by a Power, by a Great Mind, and Will, for a purpose, not to mark time like the watch, but to be able to make the watch; not only to produce fruit like the flower, but to be the house for a thinking mind to live in,—a dwelling place for a living soul.

Which is the most wonderful, the watch which cannot move itself, which cannot think a thought, the flower which is all alive and cannot have any thought,—the little baby, the full grown man, who can move himself and think and make a watch, or that great Power which makes the flower, and turns the baby into the man who makes the watch?

Some people say you cannot understand such things. They make a mistake.

—The Editor.

LABORARE EST ORARE.

For still the Lord is Lord of might;
In deeds, in deeds, he takes delight.
The plough, the spear, the laden barks,
The field, the founded city, marks;
He marks the smiler of the streets,
The singer upon garden seats.

He sees the climber in the rocks.
To him the shepherd folds his flocks.
For those he loves that underprop
With daily virtues heaven's top,
And bear the falling sky with ease,
Unfrowning caryatides.

Those he approves that ply the trade,
That rock the child, that wed the maid,
That with weak virtues, weaker hands,
Sow gladness on the peopled lands,
And still with laughter, song, and shout
Spin the great wheel of earth about.

R. L. Stevenson.

Nat. Unitarian Temperance Association.

ESSEX HALL, ESSEX STREET, STRAND, W.C.

President: Rev. Dr. J. E. CARPENTER. Hon. Sec.: Mr. E. F. COWLIN, 19, Northwood Road, Forest Hill, London.
Hon. Treasurer: Mr. E. BUSER.

TEMPERANCE REFORM AGAIN

ABOUT a year ago there was a movement for Temperance Reform on the lines of total prohibition, great efforts were made to convince the Government that the state of war in which we found ourselves demanded it at least during the war and six months after, and a monster petition was presented to the House of Commons, but apparently nothing came of it. Like the blacksmith's boy's horse-shoe it ended in a fizz. Great as the effort was it failed to influence legislators to any considerable extent. Possibly they had a suspicion that it was more of an attempt to rush the business in the absence of part of the electorate; probably they saw through the manoeuvre to take advantage of the panic feeling about the War to snatch a victory for reform. Those are the tactics of the other side, they do things without mandate, but let us be quite straight even in legislation for what we believe to be for the good of the community. Even this reform in a democratic country must be according to the will of the people. We must continue to educate the elecorate in view of a General Election, and the participation in it of the men from the front, and the promised addition of women voters. They tell us that the prohibition idea is spreading amongst the people, let us keep it on the run. The Prime Minister has been saying things about drink again; it must be tackled, he says, but the people are the only force which can accomplish a great measure of temperance reform and anyone who divides the people will be a bad temperance adviser, and it will lead to disaster from the point of view of national interest. And he talks about State Control, if nothing is done now to acquire complete and absolute control over "The Trade" he fears that when demobilisation comes there will be an irresistible demand to put "The Trade" back practically where it was before. There he is at it again, blowing hot and cold, hinting at carrying the people with us, and in the same breath suggesting the old tactics of throttling our foe whilst we have him down. We do not suppose that our own countrymen are as a rule more unreasonable than the people of Denmark, and according to a report in the International Record, there is every indication that this year (1917) will witness there some very radical changes in the liquor laws of the country. After many years of persistent education and agitation on the part of the Danish Temperance advocates, a Parliamentary Committee was appointed in 1907, and on its recommendation the Government introduced and carried through the Lower House, a new Licensing Bill which changed the whole licensing system. The Upper House threw out the Bill. The struggle continued for five years until 1912, when a compromise was effected by which the proposals should come up for revision in 1917, and on that undertaking the Bill became law. Thus they got something like State control of the trade, and now comes to hand, says the "Record" for April, the information that the Government of Denmark has adopted Prohibition. Let us take courage then, and "keep on keeping on," next time we may make our horse-shoe. R.N.

Only a Poem.

In 1843 Miss Elizabeth Barrett (afterwards Mrs. E. B. Browning) read a report on social conditions which stirred her to the depths of her being. It contained a terrible record of wrong and slavery among the children of England, who then worked long hours in mines and factories. And she sat down and penned the poem which like a clarion note rang through England, "The Cry of the Children." This Blackwoods published that autumn.

"Do you hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
Ere the sorrow comes with years?

. . . . . .

They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
In the country of the FREE."

So this report, which might otherwise have been relegated to the limbo of blue-books touched a woman's sensitive nature. And there was given to the overworked, toiling children of England a voice which stung the country into action.

The poem was well described as "full of a nervous, unflinching energy . . . . of which Dante himself might have been proud." Elizabeth Barrett knew more about the conditions of the children than was told in the pages of the report, for the author, Mr. R. H. Horne, was a personal friend. So this woman's imagination transferred to her verses something of that poignant cry of sorrow. The dumb sufferings of the mites in factories and mines at last found a voice—

"A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning."

The poem, which is only a short ode, carried the sensitive and heroic soul in its throbbing lines:

"For all day we drag our burden tiring
Through the coal-dark under ground—
Or, all day we drive the wheels of iron
In the factories, round and round."

Just think of the conditions in the mines of that period. Tiny children sat for twelve or fourteen hours ankle deep in mud, down in the damp and dark roads of the pit, opening the traps for the hutches, while bigger children dragged the hutches. Elizabeth Barrett saw it all clearly:

"Still all day the iron wheels go onward
Grinding life down from its mark;
And the children's souls, which God is calling sunward,
Spin on blindly in the dark."

. . . . . .

We are apt to get accustomed to the most wretched social conditions, and in time become brutalised by them. Our contact with them degrades, because we are part of humanity. And as long as there are bad conditions, sin and suffering, we all must suffer in some way. But the sensitive soul of a woman revolted against these terrible conditions. Her cry went forth—

"Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand."

C.S.

A CRUSADE.

One of the great things now emerging from the conflict is our larger view of all the issues involved. At the beginning we believed our part in the war was necessary to vindicate the rights of Belgium. We are now realising that it is a crusade on behalf of the common basal rights of mankind and the very foundation of civilisation. —Rev. Dr. Jowett.

We refer our readers to our advertisements for particulars of the Annual Meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, British League of Unitarian Women, National Unitarian Temperance Association during Whit-week. As our June issue will be published before Whit-week we shall again call attention to these anniversaries.

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Literary matter to be addressed to the Editor; business communications to the Manager.

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT 5, Fetter Lane, London, E.C.

Nelson Unitarian Church.

MAY FAIR Annual Sale of Work

Saturday, May 5th, 1917,

In aid of Church Funds and Reduction of Debt on Church Building.

To be opened at 2-30 by **Mr. LAWRENCE CLEGG**, of Bury. His Worship the **MAYOR of NELSON** will Preside.

Donations in Goods or Money will be gratefully acknowledged by the Rev. H. B. SMITH, 13, Victoria Avenue, Brierfield, Lancs.

National Unitarian Temperance Association.

ANNUAL MEETING, Essex Hall,

JUNE 1st, 1917.

Business 4-30. Public Meeting at 7.

Chairman - **Rev. Dr. J. E. CARPENTER.**

BRITISH LEAGUE OF UNITARIAN AND OTHER LIBERAL CHRISTIAN WOMEN.

THE ANNUAL MEETING

Will be held at ESSEX HALL, ESSEX STREET, W.C., on

Wednesday, May 30th, at 2-30.

The President, Mrs. BLAKE ODGERS in the Chair.

Short Opening Service conducted by

Mrs. M. CROOK (of Manchester College, Oxford).

Among others taking part will be

Mrs. BERNARD ALLEN and Mrs. MULLINEUX, President Liverpool District League.

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WHIT-WEEK MEETINGS, 1917.

President: Rev. Dr. CARPENTER.

Tuesday Evening, 29 May.

RELIGIOUS SERVICE

Essex Church, The Mall, Notting Hill Gate, at 7-30 p.m.
Devotional Service: Rev. C. M. Wright, M.A. (Mansfield).

Preacher: Rev. W. H. DRUMMOND, B.A. (London).

Collection in aid of the Funds of the Association.

Wednesday Morning, 30 May.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING.

Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, at 11 a.m.

The Report: Election of Officers & Committee; Resolutions and other Business.
The President, Dr. Carpenter, in the Chair.

Wednesday Evening, 30 May.

PUBLIC MEETING.

Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, at 7 p.m.

ADDRESSES on '*The Need and the Opportunity for the Reorganization of the Religious Life of the Country.*'

Rev. Dr. Carpenter in the Chair.

SPEAKERS: The Master of Balliol (A. L. Smith, Esq., M.A.), Professor Caroline Spurgeon (University of London), Rev. R. F. Rattray, M A., Ph.D. (Hindley), Rev. Neander Anderton, B.A. (Monton).

Thursday Evening, 31 May.

CONVERSAZIONE.

Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, at 8 p.m.

The President will receive from 8 to 8-30.
Tea and Coffee will be served in the Small Hall from 8-30.

Tickets 1/- each, may be had at the Book Room.